

Budget Unit Brief

FY 2017



Volunteers and Keepers of the Land Program

Purpose and History

The Volunteers and Keepers of the Land Program began in 1999 under the purview of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Keepers of the Land Program coordinates volunteer activities within the DNR and works with the federal AmeriCorps Program to obtain volunteers that will work in Iowa to enhance natural resource areas and to maintain the environment. Projects completed by the AmeriCorps Program have improved Iowa's natural and recreational areas and have created environmental awareness at Iowa State Parks and Forests. The Volunteers and Keepers of the Land Program also works in cooperation with local community partners.

During the flood of 2012, the Iowa AmeriCorps volunteers traveled to areas along the Missouri River to assist in evacuating people from flooded areas, sandbagging operations, and other activities related to the flood. In previous years, the volunteers have been deployed to Des Moines, Cedar Falls, Lake Rathbun; Parkersburg, and Lake Delhi to assist with other natural disasters.

Other areas the volunteers serve include:

- Environmental education
- Trail restoration
- Sustainable land use projects
- Fisheries and wildlife conservation
- Habitat enhancement initiatives
- Volunteer recruitment and involvement in natural resource conservation

Funding History

Funding for the Volunteers and Keepers of the Land Program has been appropriated from the Environment First Fund. The annual appropriation has been \$100,000 up to FY 2015. There has been no appropriation since then.

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More Information

DNR/AmeriCorps Program: <http://www.iowadnr.gov/InsideDNR/VolunteerOpportunities/AmeriCorps>

National AmeriCorps Program: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/amicorps>

Iowa General Assembly: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/>

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